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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 3)

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/WE AND NEA/I

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2020  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNHRC](#) [IR](#) [BE](#)  
SUBJECT: BELGIUM SUPPORTS U.S. ON IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT  
SPEAKS PUBLICLY THROUGH EU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

REF: A. STATE 7242  
[1](#)B. STATE 12108  
[1](#)C. STEPHEN MULL E-MAIL 2/6/2010

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Richard Eason,  
reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) On February 9, Embassy Acting PolEconCouns discussed the human rights situation in Iran with Pierre Gillon, Iran desk officer in the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. PolEconCouns noted the issuance on February 8 of the joint US-EU statement and asked whether the Belgian Foreign Ministry would be issuing its own complementary and supportive statement. Gillon said that this was not expected, because Belgian representatives had participated in the formulation and approved the issuance of the High Representative's statement. He said that under the new procedures of the Lisbon Treaty and its general spirit, it would be increasingly rare for Belgium to issue its own statements that echo the High Representative's public pronouncements.

[1](#)2. (C) Nevertheless, Gillon said the GOB fully condemns the human rights violations ongoing in Iran. Moreover, on January 22, the MFA had summoned the Iranian Ambassador to Belgium and had delivered a wide-ranging demarche that had been coordinated EU-wide, expressing concern about the impending executions of two political prisoners, repression of Bahai believers and political dissidents and the Ashura events in late December. Within the EU, Gillon said, the topic of Iran is a standing issue and a special priority of the "Specialized Group on Human Rights", in which Belgium participates.

[1](#)3. (C) Gillon said that Belgium intends to take the floor at the UNHRC Iran Universal Periodic Review in Geneva and express deep concern about human rights in Iran. The European Union member states have divided up the topics to discuss and Belgium will speak to use of the death penalty and to discrimination against women. Belgium has also submitted an extensive list of written questions to Iran, Gillon said. He added that Belgium will not support Iran's candidacy for the Human Rights Council, at all. It will lobby hard, bilaterally with other countries, to prevent Iran from gaining a seat, Gillon said. Belgium supports the visit of a delegation from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and inviting the Special Rapporteur on Torture to visit Iran.

[1](#)4. (C) Gillon said that after Iran's national day, Belgium and the EU will evaluate the situation. If violence occurs, they will certainly react appropriately, he said.

